

Employee FRONTLINE

A newsletter from the WA State Employee Assistance Program

In Search of Conscientious Employees

Employers love conscientious employees. Some companies screen purposely in their hiring practices to find these prized workers. Higher levels of productivity flow from employees who are conscientious, and experience shows conscientious workers require lower levels of supervision and oversight. These employees are less likely to participate in counterproductive work behaviors, including procrastination. Are you conscientious in your work habits? Some research shows that the conscientious personality trait is the one most closely associated with living longer! Can you raise your conscientiousness quotient? Learn more at www.tinyurl.com/act-valued



Improving Your Love Life



Dale Carnegie's best seller, "How to Win Friends and Influence People," has one idea that could improve your love life: when people feel appreciated rather than manipulated, they'll more likely cooperate with you. One old-fashioned chapter on improving marriages was removed 30

years ago, but the key point still stands: personal change is the most powerful way to influence others to also change. Many couples who still love each other watch their relationship lose luster over the years. What follows is a desire to have the other person change back to the way it was. Try the opposite, even though it may be more fearful and difficult. To create positive change in your relationship, do what's right and healthy for you, but try the following: 1) Understand what your partner truly values most about you. What talents and abilities do you possess? This is a key to gaining perspective and feeling more empowered for the next step; 2) Understand your partner's viewpoint and what the person needs from you. It may be very different than what you think he or she wants; and, 3) Experiment with delivering on those needs. Evaluate your efforts at change, and notice whether reciprocal and positive change in your partner followed.

Communication Challenges for New Generations

If you were born after 1980, you may be very proficient with technology.



You're on the go, texting, snap-chatting, and grabbing information from news feeds. You may also be short on patience for long presentations and meetings that run over. Younger-generation workers value fairness, honesty, and straight-talk, but here's an important tip: although you may be an outstanding producer, be cautious about applying instant communication tools to every situation. In-person meetings still have the edge with most management leaders. Develop an instinct for knowing when a face-to-face meeting in a real room is the proper forum to address any issue or problem. In 2009, the Harvard Business Review surveyed high-powered management readers. Eighty percent viewed in-person meetings as a key to success in building long-term relationships.

Source: [Harvard Business Review Oct 2009](#) (long download)

Weight Loss and Your Emotions

A *Consumer Reports* survey of 1,300 psychologists found overwhelming agreement that people struggling with weight loss who paid attention to the role emotions play were more successful than those who didn't. The surveyed participants all work with client weight issues. Managing behaviors and emotions related to weight management and their impact on emotional eating were twice as important as making proper food choices in the pursuit of losing weight. Could short-term counseling help you stay motivated and deal with negative thoughts so you get a handle on behaviors standing in the way of progress? Source: [Emotions and Weight Loss](#)



Overlooking Warning Signs of Workplace Violence



If an act of workplace violence occurred, would you think, "I'm not surprised?" Helping to prevent workplace violence is every employee's responsibility, but knowing the signs and symptoms are the easier part of the job. More difficult may be preventing denial or dismissing

signs or symptoms when they appear. You're naturally at risk for having blinders on if you've never witnessed or been a victim of violence. Warning signs may not be dramatic, and a perpetrator may not be a wild and agitated employee. If you're unsure about something that concerns you, discuss it with a supervisor or other individual with the authority to support whatever the next step might be to prevent a violent act.

Awareness for Better Work-Life Balance

Paid work is an essential part of life for most of us, yet leisure and personal care are essential for physical and mental well-being. How to strike a balance? The key is being aware of how you use time. Try this: decide where you want to achieve better balance. The big "8" are relationships, family, finances, spirituality, health, career development, socializing, and leisure. Use 3x5 cards for this exercise. Program a twice-a-day reminder in your Google calendar or some electronic device. At those moments, ask, "Do I have any free time today or this week to insert a target activity to improve balance?" If yes, schedule it. Do you suddenly have two hours in your schedule between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. tomorrow? Then start the spring garden you've always wanted, lose yourself in a bookstore, have breakfast with your partner, or just find a quiet spot at the park and sit. Source: [OECD](#).



Are You Valuing Diversity?

Hopefully you accept the value of diversity, but is it a challenge to *act* like you do? Be sure you understand your biases. Everyone has them. It's impossible not to possess a few based on our life experiences. Biases are predetermined tendencies to make judgments or act in certain ways based upon your point of view. These pre-established ways of thinking are natural, but self-awareness is the key to gaining control over their reflex nature. Succeed with this task and you'll be in better control over your behavior. You'll be less likely to say or do something to undermine a positive work culture. Instead, you'll champion and promote a workplace where everyone feels respected.



Nightshift Workers: Know Your Numbers



Nightshift workers are employees with unique health stressors that most workers don't face. If that's you, be sure to get a physical and talk to your doctor annually.

Pay attention to lab values from blood work associated with increased risk of diabetes, obesity, or heart disease. Plenty of research shows that nightshift workers can be at increased risk for these medical conditions. To spot problems early that can be linked to sleep disruption and metabolism distress, know your blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides, and fasting blood sugar numbers. Safeguard your health with a consistent focus on sleep strategies, and be watchful for ongoing relationship or family conflicts at home related to your work schedule. Make the EAP the first stop for getting help in resolving these matters. For more information, go to [Health Risks of Shift Work](#)